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ABSTRACT

This curriculum guide was developed to assist middle-school students in understanding Indian culture and values. Twelve activities and a research project outline are part of the guide. Sections of the "Passport to India" unit include: (1) "Geographic Setting"; (2) "The People"; (3) "Government"; (4) "Economics"; (5) "Religion"; (6) "Education"; (7) "Artistic Accomplishments"; (8) "Recreation"; (9) "History"; (10) "Problems"; and (11) "Symbolism." (EH)

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Our Friends in India:
A Project for Sixth Grade Students

by

Anne Holland

A Curriculum Project Developed During the 1996
Fulbright-Hays Seminar Abroad Program: India Seminar

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Rosalie Gendimenico

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334 West 85 Street
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December 1, 1996

Mr O. P. Bhardwaj, Executive Officer
The United States Educational Foundation in India
Fulbright House
12 Hailey Road
New Delhi 110 001 INDIA

Dear O.P.,

Enclosed is a copy of my finished project. I recently began working on it with my class and they are very excited. I have been in contact with Sr. Prima from the Stella Maris Convent School in the Chandrapur District of Maharashtra. We have begun exchanging pen pal letters with students in the school. I hope it will be a very enriching experience for both my students and those in India.

As you know, I went on to China after my stay in India. By the time I got back to the United States I was totally exhausted and school began a few days later. It was at least a month before I was "back to normal". That is if I ever was *normal*.

Not all of my packages sent from India have arrived in the United States. I have received some but not all. I am anxiously awaiting the remainder as that package contains all those beautiful photographs of the arts (puppets, dance,etc.)

I hope to return to India some day. The next time I would like to come in the winter. After I retire in a few years I plan a trip around the world so maybe you will see me then. My nephew, who is graduating from college this spring, is planning a trip around the world immediately after graduation. I will give him your name and the U.S.E.F.I. address as a safety net in case he needs advice when he reaches India.

Best regards from the United States.

Sincerely,

Anne Holland

Our Friends in India
A Project for Sixth Grade Students

GOALS:

The students will attain a heightened awareness of their relationship to a different world community. Through an in-depth study of Indian culture the students will develop empathy and decrease egocentric, ethnocentric, and stereotypic perceptions of a group of people who are different from themselves. Understanding the values of others should lead to a clearer understanding of ones own values.

The students will investigate the attitudes, values, experiences and behavior of the Indian people. This will allow the students to utilize problem solving skills in developing constructive solutions for moral dilemmas and social conflict.

OBJECTIVES:

1. The students will develop an awareness of ones own values in relation to another world community, specifically India.

2. Students will become active participants in activities to prevent prejudice and bias related conflict.

3. Students will avoid using closed, dogmatic, or blanket generalizations to explain behavior different from their own.

4. Students will objectively assess the reactions of another culture toward their own behavior.

5. Students will learn that different religious beliefs, economic conditions, historic pasts and geographic settings have influenced the creation of diverse value systems.

6. Students will learn that people from different cultures have made lasting contributions to society.

7. Students will utilize communications technology as an effective classroom strategy that increases student learning.

8. Students will learn to communicate and work with other students and teachers who share academic interests but represent a different geographic location and cultural perspective.

9. Students will research local regional history, cultures, cultural arts, government, and geographical conditions and share their acquired knowledge with students from India.

Activities

1. The students will brainstorm ideas and concepts they have about the country of India.

2. The students will view a variety of slides taken in India to introduce them to the area of the world to be studied. These slides have been categorized in the following sections: people, transportation, landscapes, vegetation, wildlife, education, architecture, religion, and the arts.

3. The students will establish a pen-pal network with students from the students from a partner school in India, the Stella Maris Convent High School & Junior College in the Chandrapur District of Maharashtra

4. The students will develop and create videotapes that represent different aspects of their own culture. These videotapes will be sent to our partner school in India. The students will become video pen pals with students in India.

5. The students will read books with Indian themes and by Indian authors. This will expose the students to Indian culture both in the past and present.

6. Each student will select a research topic relating to India culture and produce a paper and project on the selected topic. *

7. In conjunction with the music department, the students will learn about traditional Indian instruments. They will also learn some traditional Indian folk songs.

8. The students will compare Indian and American folk tales to discern similarities and differences.

9. The students will learn about traditional Indian customs, holidays, and festivals.

10. Through field trips to the American Museum of Natural History and the Metropolitan Museum of Art , the students will be introduced to some of the art of India.

11. The students will study the accomplishments of Mother Theresa and her work with the poor of India.

12. The students will investigate the life of Mahatma Gandhi and evaluate his impact on the world.

* A research project outline is attached. This has been sent to our partner school and will be utilized by students from both schools to clarify the topics about information for sharing.

Passport to India

Research Questions To Be Investigated

I. Geographic Setting: How does time, geographic setting and history impact India?

A. Location

1. Where is India? What is it position on the earth's surface (longitude, latitude, continent, hemisphere)
2. How far away from New York is it? (distance in miles or kilometers, travel time by plane, number of time zones away)
3. What countries and oceans border India?

B. Place

1. Natural Characteristics

a. What is the size and shape of India? How does it compare to the United States?
b. What are the outstanding physical features of India?
c. What is the climate? (temperature, rainfall, seasonal changes)
d. Identify and list the vegetation, natural resources, and animal life.

2. Man Made Characteristics

a. Identify and list the many, varied man-made structures. (buildings, parks, dams, streets, highways, railroads, bridges, irrigation systems etc.

II. The People: What unique characteristics do these people have that make them different from people in other cultures?

A. People

1. What ethnic groups live in India?
2. How is the population distributed? Where do most of the people live? (cities or country side, etc.)
3. How is this population distribution affected by this culture's location and place?
4. Explain the social structure?

B. Basic Needs

1. Investigate how the people meet their needs for food, clothing and shelter.

III. Government: How is the government structured and what effect does this structure have on the people?

1. What type of government does India have? Examine how the government is structured?
2. What are the political divisions of India? (counties, cities, villages, towns, etc.)
3. Who may vote?
4. Who are the present day leaders and describe their roles.
5. How are the present day leaders selected ?

IV. Economics: How does India's location affect its economy?

A .Money

1. What currency is used? (Be specific as to name, denominations, and appearance.)
2. What is the value of the currency compared to the U. S. dollar?

B. Trade

1. What is exported from India? to where?
2. What products does India import? from where?
3. Examine the areas location to see what effect it has on which products are grown.
4. Interpret how the location affects the area's clothing and shelter?
5. Assess whether there is a surplus of any product

C. Technology

1. How are good produced?
2. What tools are used?
3. Examine how people used have technology to change the environment?

D. Work force

1. What are the many, varied and unusual ways people earn a living?
2. Examine how the location and place affect the way people earn a living?

E. Transportation

1. What are the different modes of transportation for both people and goods in India?

2. Investigate how the location and place affects the the modes of transportation?

V. Religion: How does India's religion impact on the people?

A. Religious beliefs

1.What do the people believe about God or gods?

2. Do the people believe in an afterlife? Explain.

B. Religious practices

1. Summarize how the religious beliefs affect the lives of the people?

C. Rituals and customs

1. Identify specific rituals for birth, death, marriage etc?

VI. Education: What can we learn about India from its educational system?

A. Schooling

1. What type of school system does this culture have?
2. Who is eligible for schooling?

B. Language

1. What languages are spoken?

2. How is the language written (alphabet? pictographs?, glyphs?) Find an example of the written language if is different from American English.

C. Number System

1. Are there any characteristics that make the number system unique?

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2. Compare and contrast the the number system to ours.

3. Examine the calendar of India. Is it different from ours?

4. Interpret the practice of dating events. Does this culture use AD and BC as we do?

VII Artistic Accomplishments:

Analyze the art forms from India. What connection can you make to our culture?

A. Art

B. Music

C. Dance

D. Drama

E. Literature

F. Architectural monuments and engineering feats

VIII. Recreation: What can we learn about the people from their recreational activities? Can you make any connections to our culture?

A. Games and Sports

B. Use of leisure time

IX. History How does India's unique history impact India today?

1. In what time period did India begin to flourish?
2. What are the significant occasion in its history?
3. Who were some important leaders from the past?

X. Problems: Uncover problems evident in India. Discover ways the people and their government are solving the problems.

A. War and Peace

1. Was India involved in any wars?
2. What was the cause of the war and what affect did war have on India?
3. Analyze any war tactics that are or were unique to this culture.

B. Other problems: (Crime, poverty, etc)

XI. Symbolism

A. What is the meaning of any symbols that describe India? (flags, seals, currency, etc)

Activities Relating to Research

I. Geographic Location

A. Illustrate the size and shape of India on a map using a key.

B. Use the map to explain the outstanding physical features? (mountains, rivers, deserts, natural wonders, etc.)

C. Choose one of the man made structures. Illustrate sketch or build a model of it.

D. Evaluate the importance of one of the man made structures. Compare it with a man made structure in the United States.

E. Prepare thematic maps showing climate, resources, and population patterns. Compare these maps to other countries on the globe.

II. The People:

A. Describe the different responsibilities of men and women. Compare it with other world communities

B. Compare the social structure with that of other locations on the globe.

C. Compare food, clothing and shelter to other areas on the globe.

III. Government:

A. Compare and contrast this countries government with the government in the United States.

B. Prepare an illustrated biography of one of the present day government leaders.

IV.Economics:

A. Analyze how India is linked with other locations on the globe? Show your evidence with a diagram or chart.

B. Evaluate any evidence of interdependence found in India? Demonstrate the interdependence between India and the United States

C. Compare India's technology with other places on the globe.

V. Religion:

A. Select a ritual from birth, death or marriage. Compare and contrast it with a ritual from our culture.

B. Compare the religious structures with other places on the globe.

VI: Education:

A.Compare Education in India with that of the United States. What are both the positive and negative aspects of both systems?

VII. Artistic Accomplishments:

A. Compare an Indian art form with one of those in the United States.

B. Demonstrate an art form that is unique to India.

C. Create an Indian Art museum showing samples of various kinds of art from India.

VIII. Recreation:

A. Compare and contrast games, sports and use of leisure time with other world communities.

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IX. Problems:

A. Compare problems that India and the United States have in common. Discover how the different governments are trying to solve these problems.

X. General:

A. In your opinion what is the most important achievement of India? Give reasons for your opinion.

B. In your opinion which important achievements or inventions form India had an impact on other civilizations? Defend your position.